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THE

MARTYRDOM

OF

ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL;

A POEM.

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This Poem was recited before the Rhode-Island Alpha of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, at their Anniversary, September 3d, 1834, with the following introductory observations :—

Gentlemen of the Phi Beta Kappa Society—

In offering to you on such an occasion such a poem as that which I now present, one remark becomes important. When, a few months since, I had the honor to be appointed your poet for this anniversary, it was already too late for me, under the engagements which I was required to assume, to attempt the composition of any thing new and especially appropriate. Under these circumstances, the only way in which it remained possible for me to discharge that duty which every man, on these occasions, owes to his Alma Mater, was by laying before you some fruit of earlier leisure. The following poem was projected and begun during a short residence at Rome. Around that mighty metropolis of the earth, the history of all ages seems to have revolved ; and one is there continually discovering some link of connection between the ancient and the modern, the Pagan and the Christian world. Such a link I thought I saw in the tradition of the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul ; and this is the foundation of a poem which, viewed from this point, may not seem altogether unsuitable to this occasion.

THE

MARTYRDOM

OF

ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL.

The morn was high in heav'n, the morn of Spring ;[1]
Bask'd in its joyous blaze each living thing:
Through bow'r and grove came down the golden beam,
It bath'd the hills, it glitter'd on the stream ;
Just breath'd a wind the olive's leaves to stir,
And touch on high the crests of Northern fir ;
Mid laurel walks the budding orange hung ;
Round the young holm the vine's soft promise clung ;
Loud was the voice of song from bush and tree;
On his blithe errand hied the wakeful bee;
The sportive lamb leap'd lighter on the plain;
Strong trod the ox beneath the massy wain;
Laugh'd the gay boy, he knew not wherefore gay,
Shook his bright locks, and ran to merrier play;

And bending age, amidst some sunny spot,
Laid by its staff, and half its woes forgot:
Smiling on all, the gorgeous morn arose,
All but the victim woke from brief repose
O'er the fair scene to fling a parting eye,
And then in torture and in shame to die.
Yet e'en of such there were to whom the night
Pass'd with that dawn forever into light.

The morn was high in heav'n, the Latian morn;
What glorious hues the landscape fam'd adorn,
Where the long hills from lone Soracte sweep,[2]
And the far plain spreads onward to the deep!
There is no cloud to veil th' enchanting view,
Earth's richest green, and heav'n's serenest blue:
Here nature's hand luxuriant bounty gave,
To ev'ry hope whate'er that hope could crave;
And here each pow'r of cult'ring man was tried,
Toil, wisdom, taste, and wealth, and might, and pride.
Mid cheerful farms, and vineyard's opening bloom,
And gardens scatt'ring all a world's perfume,
By arch, and tomb, and column's tall array,[3]
Lo, tow'rds each land the host's majestic Way;
Far as around the kindling eye may roam,
Rests its fond glance on classic porch and dome;
O'er hill and vale, from yon dim mountain's side,
Brings the long stream of art its healthful tide;[4]

See, on each height an ancient city's towers, [5]
So might have built the Titan's fabled pow'rs;
Bright in the sun, and open to the breeze,
Here the fair villa woos to health and ease;
There, deep beneath the grotto's solemn shade,
Pours rapid Anio many a white cascade; [6]
While southward far, amidst the mighty throng,
From slothful Tiber sounds the boatman's song.
Oh, not a rood, and not a spot, is there,
But he who passes breathes of glory's air:
'T is Alba's lake, and old Prænestе's hill, [7]
And the soft flow of meek Egeria's rill;
'T is Flaccus' walk, 't is wise Mecænas' grove,
'T is the cool path where Tully lov'd to rove;
These plains have heard the Fabii's martial tread; [8]
Here rest the Scipios, rest with all their dead;
Here all was won that man might win alone,
Knowledge and skill, the laurel and the throne;
Won but to teach, alike through rise and fall,
How great, how poor, how strange, that human all;
Won; but e'en now, long, long the height is pass'd, [9]
Down whirls the car, each hour more fierce and fast;
Though prouder deck'd, the madd'ning courser springs,
Unseen the vulture flaps impatient wings.

Palace and shrine and fortress glitt'ring high,
Ridge over ridge pil'd upward to the sky,

Like frowning Juno, stately in her charms,
The seven-hilled city spreads her queenly arms.
Not now in joy! from Jove's illustrious dome, [10]
Looks the sad burgher o'er his wasted home:
Where, wide around, hot ruins mark the path
Op'd by the whirling flame's insatiate wrath;
And thinks on those stern nights and sterner days
When sleep and hope fled far before the blaze,
When houseless thousands flock'd to fane by fane,
That, one by one, went down, ador'd in vain,
And as the Cæsar's halls of glory fell,
Seem'd as the gods of Rome had call'd farewell;
Thinks how on yon tall tow'r the monarch stood,
Mid his loose train indulg'd his mimic mood,
Gaz'd, like a painter, on the horrid glare,
And pour'd poetic sorrows on the air;
Thinks, and his eye has sunk to deadly rest,
And all the soul of Cherea fills his breast. [11]
Tyrant and fool! and could'st thou madly trust,
The guiltless blood that stain'd th' arena's dust,
Stain'd the dread rack, the cross, the fiery stake,
Should lull the vengeance guilt had rous'd to wake?
And could'st thou dream, thy golden pomp should blind [12]
That judge of kings, the future's fearless mind?
In that lone hour when thou shalt hide thy head,
A trembling slave, beneath a freedman's shed, [13]
Shalt poise the blade, yet check the mortal blow,
Afraid to strike, afraid to wait the foe,

Then shall that guilt the fierce pursuer steel,
Shall from the tomb its awful summons peal;
And when the walls thou rear'st are sunk in clay,
Thy race, thy works, thy empire, swept away,
Then, if perchance one more on earth shall spring
With all that blots a son, a man, a king,
Till crime shall shrink, and hist'ry drop the pen,
And words be faint that men have fram'd for men,
Then shall each child recall thy matchless shame,
And give the monster Nero's hated name.

Behold, the forum's throng, the murm'ring street,
The bath, the bridge, the scenes where millions meet!
Each land has exiles there, for none is free;
All loathe the lords, as all have bow'd the knee:
Numidia's swarthy son, subdued at length;
The blue-ey'd German with his giant strength;
The graceful chiefs of some devoted host
That bled to guard their Britain's lovely coast;
The crouching form where lurks a bitter heart
That yet may teach how true the Parthian dart;
The Hebrew, doom'd a tenfold scorn to brook,
A tenfold anguish writhing in his look;
All, all are here: nor their's the pride to share,
Wak'd by this pomp of fam'd, and grand, and fair:
Their's but to plod the way of wily gain,
Or curse the arts that forg'd and deck'd the chain,

And wish one equal day, one equal field,
Where naught should win, but lance, and sword, and shield.
In joy return'd from wars of distant lands,
Mark'd by his scars, the legion's vet'ran stands;
The tall prætorian nods his helm of pride,
The massy pavement ringing to his stride;
Solemn and slow the stately priests ascend,
In worship not their own to strike or bend;
The patient sculptor wakes to gradual view
Ideal forms, and dreams not all untrue;
Th' expecting crowd surround the patron's gate;
The morning chariot rolls in gilded state;
The light buffoon, with idle gibe and jest,
Scans the nerv'd athlet's mighty arm and chest;
The girded slave resumes his daily task,
Nor deems his lord's a lot the wise should ask;
Morn warms with life the city's utmost vein,
And every passion holds its wonted reign.

Such sight is here: nor seek to lift the veil,
Nor bid more secret scenes disclose their tale;
Wish not to know what princely roofs may hide,
Nor ask where humbler worth and peace abide.
Though in patrician robes all crime be dressed,
Though through the meaner crowd sweep on the pest,
Till each old image looks in mourning down,
And that stern Cato's wears a deeper frown;

Still, still, may live some ancient Roman truth,
Live, if in chains, in exile, or in youth:
E'en yet, perhaps, some hardy breasts remain [14]
Where hoary Galba leads the arms of Spain;
Yet its bright rays may omen'd glory shed
Around some stripling Titus' modest head; [15]
Yet private worth with good Virginius bloom, [16]
Reject a crown, and win a peaceful tomb;
And still, perchance, all woman's faith and grace, [17]
E'en as of late, Massilia's walls embrace,
That saw a mother, with a mother's fear,
Thy future conqu'ror, Caledonia, rear.
So lifts the bow of heav'n its radiant form,
When troubled day goes down with cloud and storm,
So draws the beams in fading splendor cast,
And gives them back, the loveliest and the last.

There is a stir of must'ring crowds to-day:
E'en such precedes the triumph's long array;
Such greets the hour, when, match'd in desp'rate strife,
The victim swordsman strikes, and strikes for life.
Group after group they come, and waiting seem
With cautious words to touch the gen'ral theme;
The gossip brings his tale, forever new;
The honor'd sire unfolds his deeper view;
With pausing breath, and fix'd, though tim'rous eye,
Women and gentle youths stand list'ning by;

But none may freely speak, or boldly hear,
Lest the cloak'd form of treach'ry linger near.
Of fearful dooms for secret deeds they tell,
Wrath that perchance with causeless fury fell,
When on a race that shunn'd each lighter blame,
It heap'd the guilt of that wild midnight flame;
Of a new faith in Eastern lands that rose,
Lands, to the gods and Rome unchanging foes;
Of wonders wrought by one who guiltless bled,
Of whose rent tomb mysterious tales were spread;
His name afar his wand'ring foll'wers bore,
And fix'd triumphant feet on ev'ry shore;
In that high name, 't was said, the blind had seen,
The lame had walk'd, the leper's flesh was clean;
But though the bad had turn'd, the good believ'd,
Nor priest, nor sage, nor lord, the signs receiv'd;
The gods, the gods, their jealous wrath declare;[18]
Th' imperial lion rouses from his lair;
With their strange love of sin, and contrite woe,
And hidden truths the wise could never know,
Their bigot zeal, that fain would break the shrine,
Nor holds e'en Jove's or Cæsar's name divine,[19]
On their own heads th' avenging blow they call—
On with the rest, this hour to see it fall!

Come to the spot where Roman glory rears[20]
The storied piles of twice four hundred years,

Where for her sons her proudest wreath she wove,
By the high altar of Feretrian Jove;
Where o'er the steep her victor's chariot came,
While mourning captives brought the spoils to fame;
Where on the kindling words her thousands hung,
Till up in arms the rous'd republic sprung:
Here at this hour th' assembled gazers wait,
And two chain'd men move onward to their fate.
There is a dungeon, deep, alas, how deep![21]
Beneath yon ancient wall's tremendous heap,
As close, as dark, as ocean's hollow rock,
Where howls above the billow's ceaseless shock;
One chasm alone its lattice and its way,
That to the victim's bed of stone convey
Naught but the bread that lengthens out his breath,
Naught but the doom that calls him forth to death:
Few fathoms off, the crowd is shouting round,
Ne'er wins his ear the farthest, faintest sound;
Few fathoms off, the dazzling sunbeams fall,
Not one can steal within his solid wall:
Not e'en the reptile's crawling touch is there;
Sense, feeling, life, all bow to slow despair.
There Afric's guilty prince in mis'ry lay,
An iron heart, of iron hearts the prey:
Hour after hour, day after day, he pin'd,
Nor fear'd, nor hop'd, enduring, not resign'd;
Till hunger's mighty pangs could bear no more,
And its last anguish drew the living gore.

Thence were they brought: that murd'rous den had rung
With sounds that come not oft from captive's tongue;
And judgment's voice had made their bondage sweet,
When, for a while, she gave them there to meet.
Since once they met on Syria's distant soil,
Long years had flown, in suff'ring and in toil:
One, with the fire that knew no earthly rest,[92]
Pierc'd to the seas that gird the utmost West;
One, to his narr'wer call as warmly true,
Sought his own people, scatter'd far and few:
Alike their aim, alike their heav'n-born strength,
Alike the hope that led them here at length,
One, to the field his hand in bonds had sown,
One, to that reaper joying but alone.
They saw on high, in art's most sov'reign skill,
Each imag'd godhead threat'ning, cold, and still;
They mark'd the whirling throngs that fain would hide
That mighty want, which brings all want beside;
They knew how soon, to trample truth in dust,
Pride stoops to shame, and av'rice creeps for lust,
How, leagu'd they stand, the common realm to save,
Atheist and priest, the tyrant and the slave;
They knew what unseen pow'rs of darker might
Wag'd desp'rate war, and curs'd the arms of light:
They knew, and paus'd not: one resistless voice
Still bade them toil, and in that toil rejoice,
And triumph in that joy; and now 't was done,
The first, the worthiest, hardest vantage won:

For God and man their willing lives they gave,
And seal'd their hallow'd vict'ry at the grave.

Few were the prison hours, and small the trace
Of aught that mars the form of strength or grace:
Look on them now; behold that rev'rend head,
With the thin frosts of green old age o'erspread, [23]
That calm, clear eye, that broad, unruffled brow,
That lofty frame, unwont for naught to bow,
That soul they paint, so solemn, yet so mild,
Firm as a warrior, peaceful as a child.
The hardiest wretch who fasten'd on his bands,
Touch'd, but with awe, those stretch'd, defenceless hands:
The crowd, inur'd to terrors, heav'd the sigh,
"So like a god, and such a death to die!"
Not that they mark'd the lines of princely birth,
His was a peasant sire, a peasant's hearth;
Long in his youth he plied the boldest oar,
Where break the waves on rough Bethsaida's shore:
Not that his name had fill'd the school, the field,
Far other arms and arts 't was his to wield,
Since from on high the rushing glory came,
And ting'd his spirit and his tongue with flame.
The manly beauty nature's mould impress'd,
Stamp of the gifts, her noblest and her best,
Health, courage, fire, and wisdom never taught,
From that high flash immortal radiance caught;

And while around he turn'd his pitying view,
Love, mercy, peace, beam'd all divinely through.
Yet he had stood where falsehood's daring tongue
Twice in the face of heav'n defiance flung,
And while, constrain'd, the awful doom he said,
Sank at his feet the apostates pale and dead.
Angels that love perchance afar to keep
Danger and fear from childhood's gentle sleep,
Angels, that swell their song to loftier praise,
When one lost sinner turns him from his ways,
Have not a tear, when, down to ruin hurl'd,
A tyrant falls, and falling frees the world;
Or when, while conscience stirs its slumb'ring fires,
The hoar blasphemer shudders and expires.

Younger is he who bears beside his chains,
Younger, though less of youthful fire remains.
His eye is piercing, but his cheek is pale;[24]
Erect he moves; erect, but worn and frail;
Hardship, and toil, and days of anxious care
Have mark'd his mien, and blanch'd his sable hair,
Without, within, each pain the guiltless weep,
Troubles by land, and perils on the deep,
The scourge, the chain, the snares relentless spread,
And the keen pang when recreant friendship fled.
His is a light that trembles while we gaze,
But never fades or falls its heav'nly blaze:

There shines the spirit born with ills to cope,
Still hoping on when fails all human hope;
Knowing what doubt to mortal wisdom cleaves,
Yet fast believing, for the heart believes:
From his own race a hunted outcast driv'n,
Forgiving all; to him was much forgiv'n.
Chosen, and call'd, and on his message sent,
His Master's voice was with him as he went;
Mid pains and tears, he pray'd, and wrote, and spoke,
And smote the fetters, till the fetters broke:
His fight is fought, his faith has reach'd the end,
Firm to the heav'ns his glance, his heart ascend;
There with the Judge he sees his crown remain,
And if to live be Christ, to die is gain.

In that last night his eyes no slumber clos'd;
The morning found him sleepless, yet repos'd:
Ne'er from his race for ease he turn'd aside,
Nor nature ask'd what mightier zeal denied:
Now, when he almost panted at the goal,
Rest more than sleep's descended on his soul.
Sleep flies the warrior, ere the morning light
Of the last battle for a nation's right;
Sleep flies the bridegroom, ere the purple ray
Proclaims to happy love its nuptial day.
Might he but write for ev'ry scatt'ring flock
That mourns, but shall not always mourn, the shock,

Oh, to the words of such immortal page
Should cling the bleeding breasts of ev'ry age!
It might not be: yet from that prison wall
Soar'd high and far the chainless heart of Saul,
O'er the vast work that, ere the world, began,
The wondrous doom that judg'd and ransom'd man,
The sev'ring barriers, prostrate at a stroke,
The nations bowing to Messiah's yoke:
On the hard dungeon stone he bow'd his knee,
And thank'd that Lord who makes the pris'ners free.

The elder slept, and passed in freshen'd dreams
Back to his own Judea's vales and streams:
Again his vessel touch'd Tiberias' strand;
Again he heard the Master's mild command;
Again he walk'd by Cedron's waters still,
And climb'd, in ev'ning's calm, the olive hill;
Again on Tabor's shining summit saw [25]
Unveil'd the seer, unveil'd the fading law;
At the high words again his bosom thrilled,
"On this firm rock my conqu'ring church I build;"
Once more he plung'd, mid winds' and billows' roar,
And sank, and clasp'd the rescuing hand once more.
Not with its shame return'd that judgment hall,
Where nature's strength was weakness in its fall,
Where chosen faith blasphem'd whom all forsook,
Till bow'd in tears by one resistless look:

Not on such thoughts, save love's warm tide to swell,
Not on such thoughts the parting saint may dwell,
For whom their cords the hard tormentors hold,
And fix the cross of death, so long foretold.

Came there no arm from heav'n mid silent night,
To touch the bonds with touch of seraph might,
Ope, as in Sion once, each iron gate,
And snatch the tried apostle from his fate?
Was there no pow'r its aiding bolt to send,
The tow'rs to shake, the solid earth to rend,
Till deeper dungeons than Philippi's heav'd,
And prouder bosoms trembled and believ'd?
None: but serene as Eden's breeze of balm
Rose to the soldier's ear their morning psalm;
So high, so pure, its distant chorus fell,
It wak'd each string that yet remains to tell,
In solemn hours, to man's most secret breast,
News of the spirit's home of perfect rest.
They sang, they pray'd; the last of many pray'rs;
Past was the reign of wishes and of cares:
And if a grief bedew'd the younger's face,
Mid the close folding of the last embrace,
'T was but to think what pangs the day must blend
On his lov'd brother's passage, till the end.

The end is nigh: on rolls the mighty crowd,
Around them still, behind more fierce and loud:

Not one of all believ'd the guilty deed,
But they had learn'd to see the guiltless bleed;
And there were there the tyrant's countless spies,
Dreaded and loath'd, the men of threats and lies,
Pois'ning with wilder tales the startled ear,
Tales of black lust and midnight feasts of fear: [26]
And thus, as on the train of slaughter wind,
The frequent cry of insult rings behind.
The faithful flock were hidden, or were fled;
Some lay in chains, and some for Christ had bled;
Some from the throng their tim'rous glances cast,
And bless'd the honor'd martyrs as they pass'd:
One man alone beside the victims stands, [27]
Moves as they move, and hears their last commands;
Oh, for one page from his recording pen,
To give each treasur'd word to future men;
That pen that once, so simple, graceful, wise,
Of heav'n's bright kingdom told th' unfolding rise,
From that first day when, high in Salem's shrine,
Shone on the aged priest the form divine,
Till, falsehood's realm fast trembling tow'rds its fall,
The Cæsars' city heard the voice of Paul !

Downward they pass'd, by many a prostrate pile,
To Tiber's bank, and o'er his sacred isle, [28]
And stood beneath the mount, where often high
The augur watched the birds of omen fly:

Slow and more slow the cohort led along,
For close and closer urg'd the circling throng;
When through the midst a panting stranger press'd,[29]
And fell on Paul's stretch'd arms and throbbing breast;
"Father," he speaks, and lifts his anguish'd brow,
"Our Israel's chariot and her horsemen thou!"
And grief and joy suffuse the martyr's eyes,
"And thou art come, my son, my son," he cries.
It was the man whose meek and gifted youth
He found in pureness, and he led in truth:
The partner giv'n, his ways, his toils to share,
To know his heart, and feel its ev'ry care:
Now from Ephesian shores, in summon'd haste,
O'er sea and land his distant way he trac'd;
Still in each church fresh tidings met his ear,
And still the last were dark with heaviest fear;
He reach'd the gate, he heard the sounds of dread,
He saw the train, and onward, onward sped;
To pierce the throng, to pass the spears he dar'd,
Brav'd all, and saw his master, and was spar'd.

For so much love a few short moments more;
A few short moments, and those few are o'er;
No scroll is left, no voice of man to tell
What tears, what counsels, mark'd the last farewell;
And yet perchance that hour of parting life
Spread o'er the church a sway that melted strife,

And rising nations felt through future years
How gently wrought those counsels and those tears.
Now at the place of death the victims pause;
Around the ring of guards and lictors draws:
See, at his post the gloomy headsman stands,
The axe of vengeance glittering in his hands;
And its rough arms the cross extends on high,
Where, like the Lord, the servant true must die;
All waits for blood; and, eager for the shock,
Ten thousand eyes are gazing tow'rds the block.

Then spake the Tarsian, and his words were clear;
"Men, Romans, brethren, yet a moment hear;
Let no man turn from hence, at home to say,
Naught hath he known of them who died to-day:
Might but all nations hear our lips confess
Why thus we suffer, and in suff'ring bless.
Not that we strove to rouse a rebel land;
Not that we flung destruction's midnight brand;
Not that in scorn of laws or lawful powers,
A deed, a word, a silent wish, was ours:
Ye men of Rome, we die for what we teach,
Truths that must speak with life's fast failing speech;
How God, who made the world, hath sent his Son,
In him his realm of grace and peace begun;
He died for all, he rose and pass'd the skies,
And he shall judge the dead when all shall rise.

Wonders and signs by us his pow'r hath wrought,
Confirming thus the mighty call we brought,
That ye should turn from pride and worldly lust,
And from the gods that mock your erring trust;"—
More had he said, but loud the murmurs sprung;
And the bold accents died upon his tongue;
And one fierce ruffian, hardier than the rest,
With his steel gauntlet smote his cheek and breast:
A look of love on all the martyr shed,
Turned to his friends, and nobly bow'd his head;
Swift falls the blade; it streams the spouting gore,[30]
And soars to God one ransom'd spirit more.

O'er the vast throng a brief, deep silence sank;
From her fall'n prey astonish'd vengeance shrank;
Then, hoarse and faint, arose the heartless call,
"So let the foes of Rome and Cæsar fall!"
Alone stood Simon; and with lifted eye,
Like the first martyr when he saw on high
Heav'n in its glory, and, at God's right hand,
As once on earth, his ris'n Redeemer stand,
"My Lord," he said, "for whom I joy to bleed,
Be with thy servant in his hour of need:
Let all in me, as in my brother, own
The peace thou giv'st in death, and thou alone."
Round his torn limbs the sev'n-fold bands they wound,
And his swoll'n forehead almost press'd the ground;

They strain'd each cord, they cleft each gushing vein,
They plied each weapon of distracting pain:
Each pang's, each torture's work, amaz'd they view'd,
Each pang, each torture pierc'd, but none subdued:
But ere the hammer heav'd its closing blow,
Chill, chill and falt'ring roll'd the life blood slow;
Ere half their bootless rage the torments spent,
On angel wings the sweet release was sent.

Oh, saints of God! when dropp'd this mortal screen,
And on ye gaz'd to all that boundless scene,
Where worlds of worlds their mighty voy'ges keep,
The barks of joy on yon blue, glorious deep;
When the long course of ages lay in light,
And what ye here believ'd was turn'd to sight;
When on that scatter'd throng ye look'd behind,
On Rome, Italia, Europe, earth, mankind,
And saw the cause whose conqu'ring front ye led
O'er tower and fane its snow-white banners spread,
Bearing o'er all, in vict'ry sure if late,
Peace to the household, virtue to the state,
Love to the lord, and freedom to the slave,
And grace in life, and triumph at the grave;
Saw, far as e'er your kindling vision soar'd,
The bliss of man, of man redeem'd, restored;
Then might ye feel how care and woe and pain,
And prayer and conflict, naught had pass'd in vain;

And hope's soft strain that cheer'd your prison hours,
Pour'd its full music there in Eden's bow'rs.

The crowd depart; the guarding band has cross'd;
In the vast city's tumult all are lost:
And friendship now may come with pious care,
And to the graves those honor'd relics bear;
The nameless graves, where o'er their still repose [31]
No hand as yet may drop the palm or rose,
But where the breeze that comes from ocean sighs,
And the lone fountain's murm'ring fall replies.
The crowd depart; each goes his sev'ral way;
The night may hide the mem'ry of the day:
Some seek, with equal eye, the shouting ring,
Where o'er the sands the rival coursers spring;
Some gaze where one who bears a Roman name
Wastes in wild pomp the wealth he bought with shame;
Some track the milk-white victim to the fane;
Some join the revel's loudest, meanest strain;
Some win with sluggish toil a scanty bread,
For forc'd content by tim'rous tyrants fed;
Some rush where wants, and some where pleasures call,
And some to darker deeds: and this is all?
No! for the dying martyrs' ev'ry word,
Some breast was there where fires unconscious stirr'd;
And, for each drop that stain'd the groaning earth,
Some phœnix spirit rose in heav'nlier birth.

A soldier stood, to view th' unwonted sight;[32]
A soldier, worn with many a distant fight;
One of the hard, stern hearts, whom marshall'd forth
The world's proud queen to bend the stubborn North;
A stranger long to pain's or pity's tear,
The shudd'ring pause of conscience as of fear;
Who all of vice, except its softness, tried,
And all of battles, but their patriot pride:
With his sharp sword, in Rome's degen'rate age,
He hew'd his way from war's ignoblest stage;
Till o'er his forehead blaz'd a tribune's casque,
And here he ruled the scene, nor shunn'd his task.
Death he had mark'd in many a form of dread,
On the red field, and on the dungeon bed.
Sinking with doubts, with woes, with terror's groan,
But ne'er till now with that victorious tone:
O'er his dark soul an unknown light was flung,
Like that which first on formless chaos sprung;
The vulture trembled like the gentle dove,
While boding thunders murmur'd far above.
'T was a new world, whose distant voice he felt;
He sought th' assemblies where the pious knelt;
He pray'd, he wept; and ere its earliest bloom
Spread the green sod around you humble tomb,
They saw the chief mid veteran foll'wers bow,
And mystic waters sign'd each warrior brow

Drawn by that thirst of Athens' sagest sage,[33]
Which breathes along his Plato's silvery page,
That thirst, which, panting for the fuller flow
Of all that wisdom knew or long'd to know,
From breast to breast, while nations liv'd and died,
Burn'd, till it drank at truth's eternal tide;
Drawn by the spreading doctrine's various fame,
Amidst the throng a bearded scholar came.
His search was o'er. When half a cent'ry's flight
Had found him faithful in his Master's sight,
While his lov'd truth sustain'd her steadfast friend,
And those his life had won beheld his end,
Thinking on yon bright martyr forms he slept,
And the vast flock their blameless bishop wept.

From a fair house on Marius' northern side,[34]
Morning's soft breeze alluring to the ride,
Yet by the hand on high in secret led,
Tow'rds the long Appian Way a chariot sped.
There sat a maiden, one whose high-born line
In the sad tale of struggling freedom shine;
One who had seen whate'er of pleasures sport,
Hand link'd in hand with guilt, at slav'ry's court,
Gaz'd with a Roman virgin's redd'ning mien,
And turn'd to nature, sick'ning from the scene,
Sick of a world, where, tainting ev'ry clime,
Roll'd high the whelming flood of lordly crime;

Sick of a heav'n, that, playful fancy's birth,
But cloth'd in light the false, frail joy of earth.
Must the soft heart that inly weeps and bleeds,
Silent and lone, and feels how much it needs,
Then drinks the cup immortal nature gives,
And beats in swelling love for all that lives,
Oh, must it come where slaughter's work is done
By man on man, beneath yon glorious sun?
Enough, enough! the words have caught her ear:
'T is bliss to speak, 't is life, 't is heav'n to hear!
Lo, years have fled; behold her sit and smile,
Where the blue waters gird that narrow isle,[35]
On whose low shore Vespasian's hard award
Bound to his grave her heart's still youthful lord:
The treach'rous gale has poison in its breath,
Th' envenom'd exile is but tardier death;
Yet she is there: they walk the sandy beach,
O'er wave and sky she bids his spirit reach,
Stays his weak frame, his weary suff'rings cheers,
And if he weeps, oh, those are joyful tears;
In their poor tent she reads from that dear scroll,
Of faith, and glory, and the deathless soul:
Swift and more swift his brighten'd days decline,
Long won and prov'd, he hopes the sacred sign;
Alone, she must, she may; behold her there,
Like a fair angel trampling on despair,
With her pale hand his paler forehead lave,
And point and follow o'er the conquer'd grave.

So speeds the work of God. From son to sire,
From spouse to spouse, it spreads th' immortal fire,
Friend teaches friend; age leads the eyes of youth;
The path is op'd, the path of grace and truth;
Op'd for the broken heart, the longing breast,
The searching spirit, happy here to rest.
O'er earth, o'er sea, on love's unfailing wing,
Their call of peace the bride, the Spirit bring;
And he who hears repeats the glorious sound;
And he who thirsts that living stream has found:
In vain the steel, in vain the monster's den,
Pride's impious scoff, and error's pois'ning pen;
Springs from the martyr's blood the seed divine;
The exile's joy lights up his dreary mine:[36]
The wise has arm'd him for the holy strife;
The humbler champion gives his death or life;
Village and town and camp and court obey;
And the fierce tyrant owns his baffled sway.[37]
By Sion's dust the spreading flock remains;
High Antioch sees them round her subject plains;
In Egypt's schools the depths of truth are read;
And ancient Carthage rears a hallow'd head:
An empire's idols fall from ev'ry dome,
An hundred crosses rise o'er Christian Rome.
Earth reels beneath the rough barbarians' flood;
Still shines the day above that sea of blood:
Scourges of God, they know the hand that wields;
To Cæsar's faith, see, Cæsar's conqu'ror yields;

And still that day, with pale and troubled beams,
O'er each wild land a hope, a glory streams.
Such was the sight that fir'd the seraph gaze;
So spread the church her march of future days:
Alas, not so alone! with wasting sweep
Came night, came midnight, long and dark and deep;
How fades the twilight, sinks each nobler star;
The watchman shouts, but still the morn is far;
High and more high, the waves of falsehood dash;
In warring din impetuous passions clash;
Now, all is hush'd, the spirit's silent tomb,
Save yon high temple flashing through the gloom;
For there, ten thousand torches blazing round,
Mid banners spread, and music's magic sound,
Pride rears his throne, his trampled captives brings,
Beneath his footstool binds the necks of kings;
Seals the bless'd page that heav'n has op'd for all,
Obedient error hast'ning at his call;
Frames for his countless hosts their wily plan;
Spurns the free heart and soul of struggling man;
Drives still devotion from her household shrine,
In cells, in wastes, without a sigh to pine;
From mercy's stream, so rich, so deep, so wide,
Gives, drop by drop, a stain'd and mingled tide;
In God's own seat aspires his pomp to hold,
Awards each realm redemption bought and sold,
With gilded state his idol pageant bears,
And bids the throng adore, and mocks their pray'rs.

Yet might e'en then the apostle's piercing eye
The heav'nly walk of faith's meek step descry;
Where, on the deeper heart that mus'd alone,
Through the thin veil bright gleams of glory shone;
Where, to the truth of elder ages true,
From that pure source the patient student drew,
Where in the wild th' undaunted preacher trod,
And list'ning nations bless'd the man of God;
Where the mild prelate stood mid ravag'd lands,
Peace on his lips, and bounty in his hands;
Where, glad a world of storms and snares to shun,
Plied her still work of love the sainted nun;
Where the true champion, battling for the Cross,
Laid down his life, nor felt that life a loss;
Where many, many, scorn'd and driv'n of men,
Woke the free hymn along some rocky glen;
And many, many, trod the ancient fane,
And trembling, erring knelt, nor knelt in vain.

And lo! it comes, it comes, th' appointed hour:
Who, who shall stay the word's own living pow'r?
The pray'r of anguish rises from the stake;
From troubled sleep the swords of empires wake;
The banish'd household seek a kindlier air;
The work must tarry: but the work is there.
Long bleeds the church, by struggling factions rent;
Long sleeps the church, in slothful peace content;

Long; but perhaps not always: unforgot
Springs to her inmost soul her destin'd lot,
In the white robes that pour resplendent light,
From Calv'ry's crimson stream forever white,
Love in her eye's high sweetness beaming fair,
And hope's fresh wreath twin'd round her golden hair,
In the pure beauty of a virgin bride,
To win the nations to her Saviour's side,
Till earth once more its pristine life begin,
This glorious earth, so glorious e'en in sin!
Perhaps, the years of darker conflict past,
Came yet a scene, the brightest, longest, last;
Its dawning told by yon prophetic ray,
Its close dissolving in eternal day.
Perhaps they saw, and earth such sight shall see,
All realms, all princes, bend the willing knee,
And, like Arabia's guided sages, bring
Their gifts, their treasures, to the promis'd King;
Gifts, where the sov'reign Father's image rests,
And, for that image, dear to filial breasts,
The hallow'd genius, knowledge, fancy, art,
The hallow'd land, and throne, and hearth, and heart.
Perhaps they saw th' imperial city tow'r
In other splendor than her crowns of pow'r;
To all her temples pour'd the pious throng,
Pure swell'd to heav'n Italia's melting song;
In Christ's pure truth, his brethren's saintly guide,
Stood the meek foll'wer of those men of pride;

Where soft Campania's shore the zephyrs kiss,
Spread a bright landscape of untainted bliss;
And thou, lov'd Venice, with thy smiling train,
How bless'd, how peerless, look'd'st thou o'er the main!
On golden isles and sunny hills of Greece
The olive rose, of wisdom and of peace;
The churches, water'd by apostles' tears,
Bloom'd up in freshness from their lonely years;
On Nubian altars woke forgotten fire;
Liv'd in the Arab's breast his patriarch sire;
Mid Indian palms, from Tigris' ancient side,
Where China flung her thousand portals wide,
Where hardy virtue tow'r'd o'er Northern snows,
Where desert Afric blossom'd like the rose,
Where, soaring on, Teutonia's eagle mind
Still grasp'd some loftier wisdom for mankind,
Where Britain's fleets, all scattered o'er the deep,
Found none but brethren, far as sail could sweep,
Where in wide lands, beyond the Roman's dream,
Nations on nations pour'd their happy stream,
Where Sion's wand'rers yet once more were won,
And heav'n's glad household hail'd the rescued son,
From scenes of thought and sport, of toil and rest,
Of joy and grief, but grief was joy more bless'd,
Like the high praise that all the rolling spheres
Send in still music to immortal ears,
A breath, a voice, a chorus pass'd above,
And all the burthen of its song was love.

No worthy deed for one alone is done;
No hallow'd life may bloom alone for one;
The humblest good man works on later times;
The loneliest virtue spreads to distant climes:
Through rolling ages winds the heav'nly chain,
Where all are links, and not a link is vain:
And happy spirits, watching from on high
The coming kingdom nigher and more nigh,
See where their labor scoop'd some bubbling well,
A mighty stream along the desert swell;
Till earth's last hour its sacred flow endures:
Firstlings of faith, how rich a tide was yours!

But thou, who com'st from thine own Northern land
On Roman dust in mem'ry's trance to stand,
When thine enchanted feet have learn'd to stray
Through all this classic waste of old decay,
Imperial halls half hid mid lowly vines,
Fair imag'd saints that smile o'er conquer'd vines;
Arch far o'er arch, where moss and ivy grow,
Columns that stood while empires died below,
The walks where fable's morning shadows spread,
The graves and trophies of the mighty dead;
When thou hast wander'd, art's impassion'd slave,
And own'd what might to man the Maker gave;
When o'er thy soul the spirit of the past
All its thick cloud of solemn dreams hath cast;

Then seek, with me, some spot where fancy's ear
Th' apostle martyr's echoing voice may hear;
And from that spot behold, behind, before,
As round a rock, the sea of ages roar.
Thou hast a bark to cross the stormy tide;
Thou too must follow, and perchance may'st guide:
From first to last one sov'reign pow'r extends,
And all the light, the worth, the glory blends;
It fill'd those breasts, it center'd in that hour,
It crown'd that spot: know'st thou that sov'reign pow'r?
Hast thou not felt, oh, feel its presence now:
And hast thou felt, in meek devotion bow:
And when thy words, in home's delighted hall,
The tale, the scenes, the dreams of Rome recall,
Then be thou strong to walk where such have led;
Arm for the field where worthier bosoms bled;
And find thy bliss to see amidst thy sphere,
In life, in death, the closing conquest near.

NOTES.

Note 1.—Page vii.

The morn was high in heaven, the morn of spring.

There is here a variation from the tradition, unless the spring be allowed, in the latitude of a poetical expression, to include the kindred month of June. The twenty-ninth of that month, is the day assigned by all the various forms of the tradition, to the martyrdom of the two apostles; though, while the accounts concur in this, one of them supposes that they died in two successive years, on the same day of the same month. So Prudentius, the Christian poet:

> Unus utrumque dies, pleno tamen innovatus anno,
> Vidit superbâ morte laureatum.—*Peristeph. Hymn.* 12.

So also Augustine *de sanct. serm.* 28. A large majority, however, of the ancient writers, maintain that they suffered at the same time, in one of the last years of the reign of Nero, probably A. D. 69. Bishop Pearson, in his Annales Paulini, mentions the twenty-second of February as the day of the martyrdom, and refers to Sylvius in Calendario VIII. Kal. Martiis. All the particulars of the several traditions, whether true or false, may be found in the Annals of Cardinal Baronius. By the adoption or omission of any of them in this poem, it is not designed either to maintain or to deny their authenticity.

Note 2.—Page viii.

Where the long hills from lone Soracte sweep,
And the far plain spreads onward to the deep!

Mount Soracte, rising above the other hills, and separated from them, is, perhaps, the most prominent natural object, to one who looks from Rome over the surrounding *Campagna*. If it be in winter, he will be reminded of the eighth ode of the first book of Horace:

Vides ut alta stet nive candidum
Soracte.

The range of the Alban hills and the adjacent extremities of the Appenines, stretch towards the southward till they terminate about Terracina, the

Impositum saxis late candentibus Anxur.

Note 3.—Page viii.

By arch, and tomb, and column's tall array,
Lo, tow'rds each land the host's majestic Way.

How conspicuous were the tombs upon some of the *Viæ*, we may judge from the still remaining mausoleum of Caius Cestius and the wife of Crassus, and from the complaint of Cicero, that the Appian Way was so lined with sepulchres, that there was scarcely room for the erection of country-houses.

Note 4.—Page viii.

Brings the long stream of art its healthful tide.

The remains of the aqueducts, which conveyed their water a distance of many miles to Rome, are, as is well known, among the most astonishing ruins of the *Campagna*.

Note 5.—Page ix.

See, on each height an ancient city's tow'rs.

In many parts of Italy, the old cities are almost uniformly situated on the very summits of steep hills; a kind of sites as picturesque as inaccessible.

Note 6.—Page ix.

Pours rapid Anio many a white cascade.

Without referring to the artificial cascades at Tivoli, the natural fall will perhaps justify this line. The *Cascatelle*, however, in which human labor has made the waters of the Teverone dash, in several places, down declivities of a hundred feet, may almost match the work of nature, though they possess a gentler beauty than that of the "præceps Anio" itself.

Note 7.—Page ix.

And old Prœneste's hill.

Quique altum Prœneste viri, quique arva Gabina
Junonis, gelidumque Anienem, et roscida rivis
Hernica saxa colunt.—*Virg. En. Lib.* vii. *v.* 682.

Note 8.—Page ix.

These plains have heard the Fabii's martial tread.

The three hundred and six of that name, who, except one man, fell together in battle. From the only survivor descended the family of the celebrated Dictator.

Note 9.—Page ix.

Won; but e'en now, long, long the height is pass'd.

The Roman historians, from Livy downwards, lament and denounce the vices of their age, and the degeneracy from the ancient hardihood. Those vices, indeed, had reached a height of which it is, perhaps, impossible for modern, at least for American minds, to form a conception. It is a most interesting speculation to consider the precise state of mankind when Christianity appeared; and the moral ruin to which, without Christianity, the Roman Empire, and, what is almost synonymous, the world, was rapidly approaching.

Note 10.—Page x.

Not now in joy! from Jove's illustrious dome,
Looks the sad burgher o'er his wasted home.

The fire, and the consequent persecution of the Christians, took place A. D. 64, and the common voice of antiquity sets the death of the two Apostles A. D. 68 or 69; so that, if historical truth were a high object in poetry, the anachronism would be inexcusable. We may be allowed, however, to suppose that the ruins of so vast a conflagration were still visible at the distance of so few years, and that an old accusation might be joined with others in fomenting popular resentment. The imperial palace on Mount Palatine was destroyed by the

flames. It is scarcely necessary to allude to the conduct of Nero on this occasion.

Note 11.—Page x.

And all the soul of Cherea fills his breast.

Cherea, the courageous assassin of Caligula.

Note 12.—Page x.

Thy golden pomp.

The celebrated palace of Nero, called from its splendor the Golden House, and of which scarcely a vestige remains, was built upon a portion of the city which had been prostrated by the conflagration.

Note 13.—Page x.

A trembling slave beneath a freedman's shed.

The narrative of the death of Nero, given by Suetonious, is minute and vivid. He had fled to the villa of his freedman Phaon, which was near the fourth mile-stone from the city, between the Via Salaria and the Via Nomentana. The account proceeds:

"Leaving the road, and dismissing the horses amongst the bushes, he escaped by a foot-path through the reeds, not without difficulty, and being even obliged to spread his garments under his feet, to the wall of the villa. Here Phaon advised that he should retire for a while into an excavation made by the removal of sand; but he refused, saying that *he would never go under ground alive.* During the short delay, while a clandestine entrance into the villa was prepared, he took in the hollow of his hand a little water from the ditch below, and drank it, saying, *this is the boiled water of Nero.*" [Allusion is here made to a luxurious device of his mentioned by Pliny.] "With his cloak torn by the thorns, he crept on his hands and feet through a narrow hole into an adjoining cell, and there lay down upon a miserable bed, covered with an old mantle. Hungry and thirsty, he yet refused some vile bread which was offered him; but drank a little warm water.—

Then, while every one exhorted him to snatch himself from impending disgrace, he ordered a trench to be made before him, after the measure of his body, and pieces of marble, if any were at hand, together with wood and water, to be brought, for the purposes of sepulture, weeping at each preparation, and repeating, *Qualis artifex pereo!* In the midst of these delays, the courier of Phaon came in, and, seizing from him his papers, Nero read that *the Senate had declared him an enemy, and condemned him to be punished after the ancient custom.* Inquiring what was that kind of punishment, and finding that the head of the naked criminal was to be placed within the stocks, and his body beaten with rods till he died, he grasped in alarm two daggers which he had brought with him, and, having tried the edge of each, laid them by, saying that *the fatal hour was not yet come.* Then he would call upon Sporus to weep and lament, and again, he would beseech that some one would show him, by example, how to die; and sometimes would reproach his own slowness with the words, *I live dishonorably and vilely;* and in Greek, *it becomes not Nero, it becomes him not thus to wait: come, arouse thyself.* The horsemen now approached, who were commanded to take him alive. Perceiving this, he said tremblingly,

"Methinks the noise of trampling steeds I hear."—*Hom. Il. Book* x. *v.* 535.

and thrust the blade into his throat, with the assistance of Epaphroditus, his Secretary. While he was yet alive, the centurion rushed in, and applied his cloak to the wound, as if he had come to his assistance. Nero only answered, *Too late*, and, *This is fidelity.* With that word he died, his eyes standing out and staring to the horror of the spectators."—*Suet. Lib.* vi. *Cap.* 48, 49.

Note 14.—Page xiii.

E'en yet, perchance, some hardy breasts remain
Where hoary Galba leads the arms of Spain.

Sergius Sulpicius Galba was called to the empire by his army, at the age of seventy-two, while commanding in Hispania Terraconensis.—

Suetonius thus describes him: "acer, vehemens, et in coercendis quidem delictis vel immodicus."—*Lib.* viii. *Cap.* 1.

Note 15.—Page xiii.

Around some stripling Titus' modest head.

Titus Vespasian, "amor ac deliciæ generis humani," was born A. D. 41, and was therefore at this time twenty-seven or eight years old.

Note 16.—Page xiii.

Yet private worth with good Virginius bloom,
Reject a crown and win a peaceful tomb.

Rufus Virginius, who twice rejected the imperial purple, during the civil wars that preceded the accession of Vespasian.

Note 17.—Page xiii.

And still, perchance, all woman's faith and grace,
E'en as of late Massilia's walls embrace,
That saw a mother, with a mother's fear,
Thy future conq'ror, Caledonia, rear.

The mother of Agricola is thus mentioned by his son-in-law and biographer. "Mater Julia Procilla fuit, raræ castitatis: in hujus sinu indulgentiaque eductus, per omnem honestarum artium cultum pueritiam adolescentiamque transegit. Arcebat eum ab illecebris peccantium, præter ipsius bonam integramque naturam, quod statim parvulus sedem ac magistram studiorum Massiliam habuerit, locum Græca comitate et provinciali parsimonia mistum ac bene compositum."—*Tacit. Vit. Agric. Cap.* 4.

Note 18.—Page xiv.

The gods, the gods, their jealous wrath declare.

The Christians were often made to bear the guilt of drawing down public calamities, as judgments from the gods. Augustine quotes the proverb "non pluit Deus, duc ad Christianos:" and even Porphyry finds the cause of the continuance of an infectious disease, in the anger

of Esculapius against the new and successful religion. (See Neander's Church History, Vol. i., pp. 87, 88.

Note 19.—Page xiv.

Nor holds e'en Jove's or Cæsar's name divine.

The Christians were termed "irreligiosi in Cæsares," for refusing to worship the imperial image.

Note 20.—Page 14.

Come to the spot where Roman glory rears
The storied piles of twice four hundred years.

The Forum, immediately below the Capitol. Under the Capitol were the Mamertine prisons.

Note 21.—Page xv.

There is a dungeon, deep, alas, how deep!
Beneath yon ancient pile's tremendous heap.

This description is literally true of the cell which is shown as their place of confinement, and in which Jugurtha is said to have been left to perish with hunger.

Note 22.—Page xvi.

One with the fire that knew no earthly rest,
Pierc'd to the seas that gird the utmost West.

That St. Paul really executed his intention of visiting Spain, (Rom. 15, 24,) or at least preached in regions west of Italy, is conclusively proved by the assertion of Clement, Bishop of Rome, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, § 5. For the rest, his return to Rome and meeting with his brother Apostle, are matters on which all authentic history is silent.

Note 23.—Page xvii.

Behold that rev'rend head,
With the thin locks of green old age o'erspread.

Nicephorus, no authority certainly in the matter, gives this description of the person of St. Peter: "Petrus quidem haud crassa corporis

statura fuit, sed quæ aliquantum esset erectior, facie subpallida et alba admodum."—*Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 37.

Note 24.—Page xviii.

His eye is piercing, but his cheek is pale.

St. Paul is represented by the same author as "corpore parvo et contracto atque incurvo et paululum inflexo, facie candida annosque plures præ se ferente, et capite modico."—*Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 37.

Note 25.—Page xx.

Again on Tabor's shining summit saw
Unveil'd the seer, unveil'd the fading law.

Mount Tabor is usually supposed to have been the scene of the Transfiguration.

Note 26.—Page xxii.

Tales of black lusts and midnight feasts of fear.

Popular fanaticism attributed to the early Christians, in their assemblies, the same outrages and unnatural practices, such as the devouring of children, which in the middle ages were charged upon the Templars, the Jews, and other persecuted classes of men.

Note 27.—Page xxii.

One man alone beside the victims stands.

St. Luke was with the Apostle Paul, when he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, which was probably in the early part of his last imprisonment. See 2 Timothy, iv, 11. He might have remained to the last.

Note 28.—Page xxii.

To Tiber's bank, and o'er his sacred isle.

This would have been the direct course from the Mamertine prison to Mount Janiculus, where St Peter is said to have suffered, on the spot now covered by the most stupendous pile on earth. Baronius labors diligently to prove, that this place was embraced within both the gene-

ral names, Janiculus and Vaticanus. The tradition supposes that St Paul was put to death, although at the same time, yet at a different place, without the gate, upon the road to Ostia, on the spot where stood the rich church of St. Paul, ruined by fire within a few years. For the sake of unity, it was thought expedient to depart from the tradition.

Note 29.—Page xxiii.

When through the midst a panting stranger pressed.

The presence of Timothy, like that of Luke, is not supported by any tradition; but it may be judged not improbable, from the fact that the last letter of the apostle had requested him to "do his diligence to come shortly unto him."—2 *Timothy*, iv, 9.

Note 30.—Page xxv.

Swift falls the blade: it streams, the spouting gore.

There is an insipid story that milk, and not blood alone, flowed from the veins.

Note 31.—Page xxvii.

The nameless grave where o'er their still repose,
No hand as yet may drop the palm or rose.

This may be imagined to have been "ad Aquas Salvias," three miles from Rome, where St. Paul was said to have been buried. The graves of the martyrs were certainly honored at a very early period; at first, without any superstitious reverence: but it was a practice that led to some of the earliest superstitions.

Prudentius says, *Hymn. de Defunct.*

Nos tuta fovebimus ossa
Violis ac fronde frequenti,
Titulumque et frigida saxa
Liquido spargemus odore.

Note 32.—Page xxviii.

A soldier stood to view th' unwonted sight

The tradition says that three of the guards of St. Paul, whom it

names Longinus, Acastus, and Megistus, were converted on this occasion.

Note 33.—Page xxix.

Which breathes along his Plato's silvery page.

That there was a greater affinity between the sentiments of the Platonists and Christianity, than between the latter and any other of the philosophical systems, is as little to be doubted, as that the attempt to unite Platonism with Christianity, brought much evil into the church.

Note 34.—Page xxix.

From a fair house on Marius' northern side.

Mount Marius, immediately to the north of the city.

Note 35.—Page xxx.

Where the blue waters gird that narrow isle.

The practice, under the Emperors, of sending political exiles to islands in the Mediterranean, was so common, that Tacitus, describing the unhappy times with which his History begins, uses the strongest expression: "plenum exiliis mare."—*Hist. lib.* i, *cap.* 2.

Note 36.—Page xxxi.

The exile's joy lights up his dreary mine.

To be condemned to perpetual labor in the mines was one of the most common, and not one of the lightest punishments, inflicted on the persecuted Christians.

Note 37.—Page xxxi.

And the fierce tyrant owns his baffled sway.

The edict of the cruel Galerius, issued A. D. 311, seems to acknowledge that he gave up the persecution, because he found it impossible to check the progress of Christianity.

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